

Message Text

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ACTION SS-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6920

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 4172

LIMDIS

FOR UNDER SECRETARY COOPER - NEA/ASSISTANT SECRETARY
SAUNDER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN DEBT RESCHEDULING

REF: A. STATE 107221; B. ISLAMABAD 4171

1. REFTEL A REPRESENTS AN UNDULY HEAVY-HANDED AND BULLY-BOY APPROACH TO DEBT RESCHEDULING AND WILL BE SEEN HERE AS PUNITIVE IN CONTEXT OF REPROCESSING ISSUE. BY SEPTTEL EMBASSY IS FORWARDING ITS ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS. I WANT TO EMPHASIZE TO YOU MY VIEW THAT IF WE PURSUE APPROACH FOR POSTPONEMENT OF JUNE MEETING, OUTLINED BY DEPT WE RUN STRONG RISK HERE OF SERIOUSLY UNDERCUTTING GEN. ZIA'S ABILITY TO KEEP PAK-US RELATIONS ON RELATIVELY EVEN KEEL. I BELIEVE IT IS NOT TOO STRONG TO SUGGEST FURTHER THAT OUR ACTIONS MAY ALSO SERIOUSLY ERODE ZIA'S OWN UNCERTAIN INTERNAL POSITION BY TRYING TO FORCE PUBLIC GOP BACKDOWN UNDER US PRESSURE ON AN ISSUE SEEN HERE AS VITAL TO COUNTRY'S WELL-BEING. FOR PAKISTANIS WHO HAVE LONGER HISTORICAL MEMORIES THAN WE DO, USG ACTIONS WILL BE
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VIEWED AS COMPARABLE TO THE HUMILITATION OF AYUB BY LYNDON JOHNSON IN 1965 EPISODE OF CONSORTIUM MEETING CANCELLATION.

2. LET IT BE CLEARLY NOTED THAT I AM NOT PROPOSING A POSITIVE USG RESPONSE AT THIS TIME ON THE SUBSTANCE OF DEBT RESCHEDULING. I URGE ONLY THAT WE NOT HUMILIATE

PAKISTAN BY FORCING A POSTPONEMENT OF A JUNE 2 MEETING WHICH WAS LONG AGO REQUESTED BY THE GOP AND FOR MONTHS HAS BEEN ON THE SCHEDULE OF ALL CONSORTIUM MEMBERS. I SEE NO REASON WHY WE CANNOT GO FORWARD WITH THAT MEETING, WHILE EXPLAINING NOW TO GOP, IBRD AND OTHER DONORS (A) THAT WE WILL REGARD JUNE 2 MEETING NOT AS AN OCCASION FOR DECISIONS BUT AS A FORUM TO LISTEN TO GOP REQUEST AND (B) THAT WE HAVE SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT NEED FOR RESCHEDULING WE WILL WANT TO POSE AT THAT TIME.

3. I HOPE YOU WILL HAVE TIME TO TAKE A LOOK AT THIS PROBLEM BEFORE WE GET ANY FURTHER DOWN A TRACK THAT I BELIEVE WILL HAVE CONSEQUENCES WE WILL ALL COME TO REGRET.
HUMMEL

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